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*A Challenge sent by the Lord of Hosts to the  
chief of Sinners :*

Considered in a

# S E R M O N

U P O N

A M O S IV. 12.

Together with an

H Y M N

Suited to the Subject.

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By *DAVID BRADBERRY.*

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L O N D O N,

Printed by T. and J. W. PASHAM,

For the AUTHOR; and sold by Messrs. BUCKLAND,  
JOHNSON and Co. in Pater-noster-Row; and E. and  
C. DILLY in the Poultry. 1766.

A Challenge for the Lord of High to the  
Chief of Honour:

Compliment in a

S E R M O N

L O N D O N

Amos IV. 12.

H M N



Subject

By DAVID BRADSHAW

L O N D O N

Printed by T. and J. W. P. Smith

For the Author; and sold by Messrs. Baskerville,  
Long-street and Co. in Black-nigger Row; and R. and  
C. Green in the Strand. 1790.

# ADVERTISEMENT.

THE publication of the ensuing discourse does not arise from any peculiar circumstance that gave it birth, or from the solicitations of those who heard it ;—neither the one nor the other would satisfy the author, though they might be thought to justify the publication. But as there are reasons to hope that happy impressions have been made by the preaching of it, the hope of some farther good impressions attending the perusal of it has induced its publication.

Should any condemn the whole compass and design of this discourse, it will not much discourage me, because I shall probably impute that to one or both of these causes—*ignorance* or *aversion*, either with respect to the author or his principles. But if (allowing the design) they find fault with the execution, I will be before-hand with them, by assuring them that I am not yet arrived at the infallible chair, but am sensible I have left room enough for their corrections and improvements ; besides, I choose it should appear in the same dress it wore when delivered without notes.



## ADVERTISEMENT.

Now if any should address me in the language of the elder brethren to the stripling of old—"I know thy pride and the naughtiness of thy heart, &c." I hope he will not find me exulting in my own prowess, but recording the judgments and the mercies of God, in whose strength alone I venture to encounter with every Philistine.—humbly praying the God of Israel, that some stone from this sling may sink deep not only into the head—but into the heart of some uncircumcised sinner.

Wellingtonborough,  
April 28, 1766.



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AMOS IV. 12.

*PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD,  
O ISRAEL.*

**T**HIS awful challenge the prophet Amos, about 2500 years ago, gave to the Jews, who were God's peculiar people, and whom he had favoured and delivered in innumerable instances; but whose goodness was as the morning cloud, and the early dew, which quickly passeth away; whose provocations and rebellions increased with God's forbearance and long-suffering; and whose crying abominations were even commensurate with the patience of Jehovah; and therefore the Lord has ~~heard~~ <sup>hewed</sup> them by the prophets, and slain them by the words of his mouth, declaring, "Shall I not visit for these things? shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"

The continued rebellions and provocations of God's Israel, rendered it absolutely necessary that the great king and moral governor of

the world should vindicate his injured honour, and resent their contempt of his authority. This he had done at sundry times, and in divers manners.—Israel was followed by a long succession of afflictions, attended with chastisements and exercised with judgments.—And yet so dreadfully depraved is man, that all these were ineffectual to Israel's conversion and the restraint of sin; and therefore the mighty God determined no longer to bear the insults of a rebellious people, but after having enumerated in the preceding verses the dreadful calamities which their continued provocations had drawn down upon them, he declares, "Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel."

But notwithstanding these words were originally spoken to the Jews, or the nation of Israel; yet I think it is evident that they are applicable to sinners in general—to every soul that hears me this day. For, were the Jews a people peculiarly favoured of the Lord, as to them were committed the oracles of God? We are more, as we not only enjoy the light of the Mosaic Oeconomy, but are favoured with the more glorious dispensation of the gospel. Were they, notwithstanding

ing their invaluable privileges, a rebellious and God-provoking people? So are we.—Were they a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity? So are we.—Were they a seed of evil-doers—children that are corrupters? So are we.—Were they joined to their idols, stout-hearted and far from righteousness? So are we.—In short, all the abominations that Israel were charged with, may justly be charged upon every one of us:—For we have been transgressors from the womb—We have sinned against God with a high hand, and an outstretched arm; we have disregarded his threatenings, and despised his promises; our actions, our words, nay our inward thoughts have been very wickedness; and while in a state of nature, all the imaginations of our hearts have been only evil, and that continually; and therefore he that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the prophet (commissioned by the God of heaven) declares—and this is his language to every rebellious sinner, to every base backslider to whom these lively oracles are sent, Prepare to meet thy God, O sinner!

In discoursing from these awful, these alarming words, I propose, through divine assistance, to consider,



First, the challenge here given to the sinner —“Meet thy God.” From which will evidently appear the necessity of preparing to meet him, and consequently the propriety of this call, “Prepare to meet thy God.”

Secondly, I shall attempt to shew you what this call to prepare pre-supposes.

Thirdly, Wherein this preparation consists, and,

Lastly, Apply the whole,

And I earnestly pray, that while I am speaking to your outward ears, the Spirit of Jehovah may so apply it to every one of our hearts, that from henceforth we may ever be prepared to meet our God in mercy.

In the first place then, I am to consider the challenge here given to the sinner, “Meet thy God;” and let it be considered with reference both to this world and to that which is to come.

#### I. Meet thy God in the present world.

Some commentators are of opinion, that this text is a discovery of God’s willingness to be reconciled to returning sinners, as if it had been said, Come ye backsliding children, turn to the Lord your God; he is ready to receive you, notwithstanding

withstanding your rebellion against him; still the scepter of mercy is held out; still God is willing to propose peace, and therefore since the overture of mercy is once more made thee, “ Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.”

But I think the generality of commentators consider this text as having rather the nature of a challenge than an invitation, or even an admonition; and I am inclined to view it in that light, more especially considering the purport of the preceding verses, which contain a summary of the various calamities which their provocations had brought upon them; after which the prophet may be supposed to conclude, that since neither threatnings nor promises, neither judgments nor mercies, can prevail to convince thee of thy rebellion, and reduce thee to obedience; I challenge thee to answer it to Jehovah! and therefore prepare to meet thy God, O sinner.

However we shall consider it in both these senses, and, first, Meet thy God in his mercies; for notwithstanding thou art a God-provoking, heaven-daring, hell-deserving sinner, yet God’s arm is not shortned that it cannot save, neither is his ear heavy that it cannot hear; no, he waits to be gracious to sinful man, for he has no pleasure in the death of sinners; but  
had

had rather they should turn and live: O that the language of our hearts may be, Turn us, good Lord, and so shall we be turned; hear the constraining language of that God, whose heart is full of love, yea overflows with pity and compassion to sinners.

“ I even I am he that blotteth out thine ini-  
 “ quities for my name’s sake, and I will not  
 “ remember thy sins.—Look unto me and be  
 “ ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I  
 “ am God and there is none else,—Come now  
 “ let us reason to gether, saith the Lord: though  
 “ your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as snow,  
 “ and though they be like crimson, they shall  
 “ be as wool.—Ho! every one that thirsteth!  
 “ come ye to the waters; and he that hath  
 “ no money, come ye, buy, and eat; yea,  
 “ come, buy wine and milk without money,  
 “ and without price. Wherefore do ye spend  
 “ money for that which is not bread? and  
 “ your labour for that which satisfieth not?  
 “ hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that  
 “ which is good, and let your soul delight itself  
 “ in fatness. Incline your ear and come un-  
 “ to me, hear and your soul shall live; and I  
 “ will make an everlasting covenant with you,  
 “ even the sure mercies of David. O Jeru-  
 salem,



“ salem, Jerusalein; thou that killest the  
 “ prophets, and stonest them that were sent  
 “ unto thee—how often would I have gathered  
 “ thee as a hen gathereth her chickens under  
 “ her wings; and ye would not? Turn ye;  
 “ turn ye; why will ye die, O house of Israel?  
 “ Come unto me, all ye that labour and are  
 “ heavy laden; and I will give you rest. He  
 “ that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast  
 “ out. The Spirit and the bride say, Come:  
 “ and let him that heareth say, Come—and let  
 “ him that is a-thirst, come: and whosoever  
 “ will, let him take the water of life freely.”

This book of God is so full of great and precious promises, that it evidently bespeaks its divine author to be the father of mercies, a God slow to anger, abundant in mercy and compassion, pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin.—It evidently shews the compassion of his heart to be equal to the power of his hand. And hence the beloved disciple (who had the honour to lean upon his master’s bosom, and was favoured with such peculiar communications that he imbibed much of the spirit of the meek and lovely Jesus) speaks of a God in Christ with such a holy familiarity; and notwithstanding he knew well the glorious names

of

of wisdom, power, justice, and holiness, which are due to his great master ; yet he leaves those for adoring Seraphs to bear upon their tongues—a more endearing theme swallows up his sole attention, while he seems to forget these, or sweetly loses them in love ; “ God is love.” Is he so—Is he so?—then let poor sensible sinners turn unto him : “ Let the wicked  
 “ forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his  
 “ thoughts ; and turn unto the Lord, and he  
 “ will have mercy on him ; to a God of love  
 “ and he will abundantly pardon.”

2dly, But meet God in his judgments ; for this seems evidently to be the main intention of the text ; and to this therefore I would chiefly confine myself.

Various and numerous are the judgments of God which are poured upon the impenitent sinner in the present world ; for the transgressor, of whatever age, station, or denomination he be, is under the curse and exposed every moment to the indignation of Jehovah.

Hear what these lively oracles declare concerning the rebellious and disobedient. Deut. xxviii. 16. &c. “ Cursed shalt thou be in the city,  
 “ and cursed shalt thou be in the field. Cursed  
 “ shall be thy basket and thy store. Cursed shall  
 “ be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy  
 “ land,

“ land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks  
 “ of thy sheep. Cursed shalt thou be when thou  
 “ comes in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou  
 “ goest out, &c. &c.

And let the Christless graceless sinner know that universal nature is at war with him; and shall execute the vengeance of an incensed God upon him one way or another: for, though God causes his sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and his rain to fall on the just and on the unjust: yet he certainly can, and frequently does, make a visible distinction between the righteous and the wicked, even in the present world.

For he who holds the winds in his fist, and whose sovereign rod, the raging tempests, the conflicting skies, and warring elements obsequiously obey; can give commission to descending storms and rapid whirlwinds to sweep away thy unsanctified possessions, and blast thee with a thousand sharp calamities.—He can command the relentless flames to seize thy habitation, and bury thee beneath its ruins. He can commission the destroying angel, to tear from thy unhallowed bosom every unsanctified possession that twines about thy heart, and shares so largely in thy affections. He can blast all the bloom of pleasure; of mental, so-  
 C cial,



cial, and domestic comfort, and leave thy withering joys to preach thy base impenitence and thy God's displeasure to all around thee. —Nay more —pains, toils, anxieties, disease and death, are all the baleful consequence of sin: And the displeasure of almighty God, gives a bitterness, a sting, to every one of these, when they come as the ill-boding harbingers of more complicated misery; at once to proclaim the poverty, and scourge the putrid pride of man. And where is the sinner that has not felt this truth? that has not groaned beneath the weight of some of those calamities?

Does thy unhumbled heart still rise in proud unnatural rebellion against thy God, thy righteous Lord and Sovereign? Know, then, thou art an enemy to him; and art thou able to contend with him who made thee, and who can crush thee before the moth? with him who made the universe, and who by his almighty *fiat*, can dash it into atoms, into its original nothing? —Know, sinner, whosoever thou art, that God has plagues, pestilence and famine; and a thousand other engines of destruction, which he will scatter with an ireful hand on his declared enemies; the language of whose conduct is—who is the Lord, that I should fear him? I will not have  
this

this man—this God-man Christ Jesus to reign over me.—Against such the sword of justice flames with tenfold indignation! And to such these words with more than usual energy are sent—“Prepare to meet thy God.”

Had man continued in obedience to his Lord and Sovereign, he would then have retained his primeval dignity and glory, and the world itself would still have been an Eden—a paradise. But, alas, “by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin.”—Hence, afflictions and distresses are now become the constant attendants of the miserable inhabitants of a disordered world. Yes, sin has made the world an Aceldama, a field of blood.

Have you forgotten—can you ever forget?—that some of the neighbouring nations, within these few years, have been almost filled with groaning hospitals and bleeding armies?

You who are the ungrateful possessors of ease, of health, of prosperity and plenty—for once give me leave to divert your attention from its usual channel to the severe sufferings of thousands (and numbers of our own countrymen too) in various parts of the world, so lately exposed to all the ravages of war: What a melancholy aspect do they bear! shall we view the plains of Germany, reek with human—

with christian—with protestant blood! shall we hear the dismal groans of expiring mortals, who bitterly experience what the prophet declares, that “every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood?” Shall we view the waste and desolate country, not only divested of its riches and ornaments, but robbed of many of the comforts and necessities of life, and even of numbers of its most useful inhabitants! Can we see every face gather blackness and meagre famine shake his iron sceptre over the barren country and pale inhabitants?—Can we see husbands—fathers—brothers and sons, torn from the weak and ineffectual embraces of their families—their friends—their relatives? I say, can our imagination present us with such a scene as this, *real not imaginary*, to thousands; and shall we not drop a tear and say, O righteous father—O almighty creator—what havock does sin (that many-headed-monster) make amongst thy works!

But perhaps you and I are so happy as only to have heard of these things by the hearing of the ear—perhaps none of us have had ocular demonstration of them. Happy England! war, pestilence and famine are far from thy gates.—How can we sufficiently adore the divine providence for its inestimable favours,  
profusely



profusely poured upon a guilty and ungrateful people! Well:

But suppose none of these judgments should overtake the sinner; yet there are numbers more in reserve; for were I like Paul to continue my speech till midnight,—nay were I to count till doomsday the judgments of God upon the wicked, I should fall infinitely short of the amount, and must leave a thousand black et ceteras behind: for however the wheels of providence shall effectuate God's righteous pleasure, in causing light to arise in obscurity to his own people who love and serve him; yet his righteous judgments shall also be accomplished upon those who are enemies to God in their minds and by wicked works—for while the sinner is not turned away from his sins, God's anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still: Nor can the impenitent sinner escape the judgments of God; for, Jehovah has declared, Amos ix. 1—4. “He that fleeth of  
 “them, shall not flee away; and he that escapeth  
 “of them shall not be delivered. Though they  
 “dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them;  
 “though they climb up to heaven, thence will  
 “I bring them down: And though they hide  
 “themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search  
 “and take them out thence; and though they  
 “be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea,  
 “thence

“thence will I command the serpent, and he shall bite them : and though they go into captivity before their enemies, thence will I command the sword, and it shall slay them : and I will set mine eyes upon them for evil, and not for good.”

But it were well for the sinner, if the judgments of God were only to attend him in the present world.—If the punishment of his iniquity should only be commensurate with the short duration of the present transitory life. And this brings me to another particular under this general head, namely, Meet thy God in the world to come.

How soon the grisly tyrant death may enter the list against thee, O sinner, and come upon thee like an armed man, thou canst not tell ; and remember there is no discharge in that war ; “It is appointed unto all men once to die ; and after death to judgment.” There thou shalt meet thy God,—not thy smiling father,—but thy frowning judge ! For the time is at hand, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, to take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of his dear Son ! When he shall come in his own glory and in the glory of his Father, attended by millions of bright angels, shining in all

all the pomp and majesty of his kingdom, with the voice of angels, archangels, cherubim and seraphim, and a noise of all the heavenly hosts and the sound of the trump of God ; and when every eye shall see him ; when they who pierced his hands and his feet shall behold his majesty, his terror, and his glory ; and when the whole earth and sea shall be broken in pieces, and thrown into confusion, and the great judge shall descend in clouds prepared with the most fiery and terrible aspect ! When the sun shall be darkened, and become black as sackcloth of hair ! When the moon shall be turned into blood ! and all the sparkling orbs shall totter in the troubled firmament, and fall from their exalted spheres, as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken with a mighty wind ! When the earth shall roll to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man ! When the pillars of heaven shall be shaken, and the last trump of God shall roll its thundering summons from pole to pole—shall awake and rear the slumbering atoms from the graves—strike off the wheels of nature \*, and bid the jumbling elements join the general conflagration !

\* Hervey.



Still favour me with your attention, while I pass on to survey the awful process of the final judgment. Behold thousands, yea, ten thousand times ten thousands, of all distinctions and denominations assembled before the tribunal of God! "I saw the dead, says John, small  
"and great, stand before God!"

See the sacred records opened, and every one judged by those things that are written therein! Behold the sheep on the right hand of Jesus! "They are they which came out of  
"great tribulation, and have washed their robes,  
"and made them white in the blood of the  
"Lamb." See them ready to be put in full possession of all that happiness and glory, which this delightful sentence of approbation contains: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from  
"the foundation of the world."

But, sinner, this delightful prospect belongs not to thee—thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter; and therefore a view of the opening glories, and swelling triumphs of the (once despised) followers of the Lamb, will only be an aggravation of thy misery, will sting thee more and more, and double thy distress.

Behold thy companions in iniquity! Will their company, which once thou so highly valued,

lued, now administer any alleviation of thy misery, or divert the clamours of thy guilty conscience? Rather view them trembling and speechless at the bar of God! The horror of conscious guilt—the consternation of helpless, hopeless misery, flushes in every face, and flutters in every breast!

But where shall I begin, or where shall I end, when speaking of God's righteous judgments upon sinners beyond the grave? What characters are black enough to write the sentence of a condemned world? Every word must be swelled with punishment, and big with eternal horror!

However, that I may not be chargeable with following mere conjectures, let us hear what those lively oracles declare, Matt. xxv. 41.

“ Then shall he say also unto them on the  
“ left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into  
“ everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and  
“ his angels !”

What a dreadful sentence is here! sinner, does not the very apprehension of it make thy blood stagnate? thy knees smite together? and thy bones to shiver and shake? Methinks, were the sentence only, “ Depart  
“ from me,” it would be inconceivably dreadful,

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a negative

a negative hell, or privation of happiness—How gloomy and horrible the thought of being banished from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power—from that presence of glory which makes arch-angels smile—which beautifies the inhabitants of the celestial world, and attunes them to the most rapturous harmony; in short, that presence which makes heaven itself heaven.—But this is not all, “Depart from me, ye cursed;” let the curse of God (of that God whom ye wilfully dishonoured and affronted, whose grace you despised and neglected) crush you down, down into the pit of burning wrath—into everlasting fire, into fire that shall never be quenched—which the flaming justice of an incensed God has prepared for the devil and his angels.

And are these things so?—Must the sinner *thus* meet with God, if unprepared?—He must—he must! O how highly necessary then for sinners to *prepare* to meet him! Had I a tongue of iron—had I lungs of brass—had I a voice like thunder—could I speak so loud that the living and the dead might hear—I would take up the prophet’s language in my text, I would cry,—“Prepare to meet thy God,” O sinner.

Proceed



Proceed we now to the Second thing proposed, which was to shew you, what this call to prepare presupposes.

And I think it evidently presupposes, in the first place, that sinners are unprepared to meet God—and such is really the case; unreconciled, unregenerate sinners are unprepared to meet God in his judgments. 1. Because they cannot contend with him—they are not a match for Jehovah.—They have not strength to resist the power of his arm—nor can they endure the terrors of his wrath—for have they an arm like God's? or can they thunder with a voice like his? Is their flesh of iron? Are their bones of brass?—Have they wisdom to counter-scheme him, or thwart his measures? or to prevent the execution of them? Rather, is not their wisdom, folly? their power, weakness? And all their boasted ability, like their boasted dignity—a mere empty shadow and chimera?

Secondly, Sinners are unprepared to meet God, because they have no offering to bring whereby to appease offended justice, and turn away the anger of Jehovah; for the offering of rams and of he-goats will by no means answer the purpose of reconciling an offended God. He will take no bullock out of thy house, nor

he-goats out of thy folds; for every beast of the forest is his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills—Thy sincerest service—thy warmest affection—thy most chearful obedience are his; and so far from being meritorious, that were they found most consistent with the purity and spirituality of the divine law, they would still be but thy reasonable service, and thou but an unprofitable servant.

But even this is not the case with unreconciled sinners; for they are guilty and abominable in the sight of God, nor have they any atonement to make—any sin-offering to bring, for Lebanon is not sufficient for a burnt-offering; *nor Arabia sacrificed, and all her spicy mountains in a flame!* \*

Thirdly, This call presupposes the great importance of preparing to meet God. And this first, Because of the great danger of an unprepared state.

It is scarcely possible perhaps to describe the dreadful danger that those are in, who are unprepared to meet God!—Some have described their situation as represented by the unwary mariner, who sleeping by the main-mast-top, is not only left to merciless winds and waves—but far less secure than in the shattered bark,

\* Night thoughts.

being every moment exposed to receive the fatal—the final plunge—and within a hair's breadth of death!

The danger of the unprepared sinner, is with no less propriety described, when he is represented as hanging by the most attenuated thread—a thread infinitely more attenuated than the spider's web, which breaks at every breeze and ready (when the Almighty, in just and holy indignation, withdraws his all-supporting hand) ready, I say, to drop into remediless destruction!

Fourthly, It presupposes the importance of preparing to meet God, *because* by such preparation only can we escape his indignation, and be secure of his favour. Not that any thing we can do is more or less meritorious of these, but only the appointed means of obtaining them. For,

Does the husbandman by plowing with industry, and sowing with a liberal hand, infallibly secure a plentiful crop in the appointed season? Is it not rather the blessing of heaven that maketh rich? Is not the increase from *him*, who causes his sun to shine, to warm and renew a withered world—from him who gives the former and the latter rain, and the appointed weeks of the harvest? Without these,  
what



what can the husbandman expect? Will not both his labours and liberality be ineffectual? And yet who is so stupid, as to conclude from hence, that it is unnecessary for the husbandman to plow and sow his fields, in order that he may reap with joy a plentiful harvest?—Certainly none—Now spiritualize this consideration, and learn hence that it is our duty in the use of means to be preparing to meet God, at the same time remembering that the Spirit of God alone can render these means effectual to that important end.

I come now to the Third thing proposed, namely, to shew you wherein this preparation consists, or what it implies.

It consists, first, in a deep and heart-affected sense of our unprepared state and condition, and of the danger and misery of such a state, “The whole, says our Lord, have no need of a physician, but only they that are sick.”

The soul is never properly sick, till it feels the spirituality, and is wounded by the pungent terrors of the divine law—which when once understood, killeth—“I was alive, saith the apostle Paul, without the law; but when the commandment came sin revived, and I died.”

When

When the commandment came in purity and power, sin, that hateful serpent, reared its snaky crest, stung my conscience with its malignant poison, and I became a dead man—dead in the law—dead in trespasses and sins.

Thus it was with Paul, and thus it will be with every soul who is enlightened by the divine Spirit to discern spiritual things; all such will find themselves poor and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked; and not only will their sins be set in battle array before them, as they have been attended with many aggravating circumstances, but it will appear that all their righteousnesses are but filthy rags, and that therefore they are abominable in the sight of God—it will appear that their hearts are not only deceitful above all things, but desperately wicked, and that therefore God is angry with them every day—that they are ripening for the sickle of the Almighty's vengeance, and staggering upon the very brink of inevitable ruin. And therefore it implies,

2dly, An earnest solicitude to be delivered from this state and condition.

When the *great apostle* felt the dreadful weight of a body of death—of sin, like a filthy putrifying carcase, he was immediately concerned to be delivered from it “O wretched

“ man

“man that I am, says he, who shall deliver me from the body of this death.”\*

When a poor sensible sinner feels a load of guilt press hard upon him, the power of sin fights hard within him—a defiled conscience—a darkened understanding—a depraved will—vile affections. When he sees the arrows of the Almighty fly round him—the sword of justice brandished over him—and the yawning gulph of misery beneath him.—In short, when he feels that he is carnally minded, earthly, sensual, devilish—and views God as a consuming fire—most certainly the genuine language of his heart will be, who shall deliver me? “O wretched man that I am—who shall deliver me?” I fly to the law, will that deliver me? No, it condemns me—every word denounces vengeance against me. “Curfed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.”

\* Though I apprehend the apostle was not in an unregenerate state when he poured out this passionate complaint—nor uttered this complaint concerning himself as considered in such a state, yet if a feeling sense of *remaining* corruption could extort such a complaint, it cannot be supposed that the same sense of *reigning* corruption would not produce the same effect in the conscience effectually enlightened; and therefore I cannot apprehend that this passage is foreign to the purpose.



—I fly to my repentance and tears—will they deliver me? No; my very repentance needs to be repented of—and my tears washed from hypocrisy and insincerity.—I fly to my resolutions of amendment—will these deliver me? No, I resolve and re-resolve, but at the approach of the first temptation all my towering resolutions totter and tumble to the ground. Having tried every expedient, and found them, like Job's friends, miserable comforters—I begin to tremble for the event, but methinks there is one resource more, I hastily embrace it, it is this; God is merciful, surely this will deliver me! Ah know, God is just as well as merciful, and cannot dispense mercy at the expence of his justice. Alas, refuge fails!—O who shall deliver me? I see no way to escape; black despair sits heavy on my heart—“O wretched man that I am—who shall deliver me?”

Now this solicitude for deliverance, arising from such views of things, I take to be no inconsiderable part of that change produced in the soul by the supernatural agency of the divine Spirit, when he comes to make all things new—to turn us from darkness to light, and prepare us to meet God, especially if we consider it in connection with what follows, as the

3d Particular under this head, namely, a sight of the means and method of salvation, which God has provided and appointed for our real preparation to meet him. And here we can only just hint at several particulars.

A sight of God, by faith, as a God in covenant—or as he is represented in the face of Jesus Christ, as a just God and a Saviour.

A sight of Christ, as a mediator, and dayf-man, a public head and representative, a surety, and redeemer. And as such,

A sight of Christ, as a law-fulfiller, as having fulfilled the law in our nature, magnified it, and made it honorable.

A sight of Christ as a justice-satisfier, as having in the very nature that had sinned made ample satisfaction to divine justice, paid the debt which we have contracted, redeemed us from the curse of the law, made all the divine attributes gloriously harmonize, and purchased for sinners, for poor insolvent debtors, for miserable delinquents, pardon, freedom, peace, grace and glory. And therefore,

A sight of Christ, as the ark of the eternal covenant for poor sinners to fly unto for safety, when the flood of divine vengeance shall overthrow a guilty and impenitent world; and wherein the feeblest saint will be eternally safe, though

though the waves of affliction should roll mountains high.

A sight of Christ as a strong-hold, into which the righteous flee and are safe.

A sight of Christ as a city of refuge for the manslayer—the Christ-crucifying sinner to flee to, and escape from the avenger of blood.

A sight of Christ as a hiding place, as a covert from the storm and tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

A sight of Christ as a compleat Saviour, of the infinite fulness, freeness and suitableness of that salvation that there is in him—of his infinite ability not only to kindle the divine life in the soul, but to keep the sacred flame burning, till it arrives at Immanuel's land, where glory for ever reigns.

I would not be understood to confine the divine Spirit to any certain rule in bringing men from darkness to light, no, he acts as a free agent—the wind bloweth where it listeth, and as it listeth—even so is the Spirit—All that I mean is, that this is the most general method in a greater or less degree, that the divine Spirit takes in preparing sinners to meet with God. But,



4thly, This preparation consists in a hearty approbation of the means and method of salvation which God has provided and appointed.

To one surrounded in the field of battle, by powerful and malignant enemies, tidings of means to conquer or escape must needs be welcome. So,

When the benighted traveller, with fainting spirits and exhausted strength, has wandered many a weary step in midnight darkness, far from shelter—farther still from home; a stranger to his way, or where it terminates, ready, perhaps, to sink for want of rest, but more for want of hope—how welcome the fair prospect of a rising sun! how kind the hand that rescues from despair!

In like manner when the poor sinner, alarmed, convinced, and trembling under the apprehensions of divine displeasure—having proved (and proved ineffectually too) every other refuge, attentively hears and eagerly embraces God's method of salvation; and coming to Christ as his last shift, is made willing in this the day of God's power, to be eternally indebted to a God in Christ for pardon, for righteousness, for life and salvation. But,

5thly, This preparation implies, a throwing down the weapons of our rebellion, and  
an

an actual closing with God in these means and that method of salvation.

The language of the soul that is brought hitherto, is—" Lord what is man that thou  
 " art thus mindful of him? What am I, and  
 " what is my Father's house? Why me, Lord,  
 " Why me? Other lords have had dominion  
 " over me—but what have I to do any more  
 " with idols?—O Lord, truly I am thy ser-  
 " vant, I am thy servant; thou hast loosed  
 " my bonds. O Lord, thou knowest all  
 " things, thou knowest that I would love thee,  
 " and that because thou hast first loved me.  
 " Thou art the chiefest amongst ten thousand,  
 " and altogether lovely.—Whom have I in hea-  
 " ven but thee, and on earth there is none—  
 " there is nothing I would desire in compari-  
 " son with thee. I now desire to make a free-  
 " will offering of my little all to thee; Lord,  
 accept the poor remains of my ill-spent life—I  
 have but two mites to present thee with—a  
 frail, dying body—and a sadly disordered and  
 polluted soul—may these be accepted, sancti-  
 fied, and saved in the name of the Lord Je-  
 sus, and by the Spirit of our God. And may  
 I not add, this preparation implies,

6thly, A cordial and habitual attachment  
 to God and goodness.

For

For (the language of the heart, of the lips, and of the life of a prepared sinner will undoubtedly be) the love of Christ constraineth me. And being bought with a price—as it is his duty, so it is his delightful exercise—his very meat and drink to glorify God his heavenly Father. Is he one of the happy number who are constituted and called a chosen generation—a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people? Then he is sensible it is for this very purpose—that he should shew forth the praises of him who hath called him out of darkness into his marvelous light. But I hasten to conclude with a few words by way of application.

And give me leave to ask every soul present a question of the utmost importance, of the last moment and consequence to your present and eternal felicity—a question by no means foreign to the subject, but the very first that naturally arises from it.—Are you prepared to meet God? How stands the matter between God and your souls? Learn your state in order to answer this question, by considering that the grand design in Christ's coming into the world, was that he might destroy the works of the devil—that he might dethrone Satan, and despoil him of his authority in the  
 hearts



hearts of men, and thereby prepare sinners to meet with God; and therefore if enmity, if unbelief—if pride—if self—if sin rule and domineer in your hearts and lives, it is an infallible proof that Satan's kingdom is not overthrown—that the works of the devil are not destroyed; and consequently that you are not prepared to meet God.

Sirs, be not deceived, God is not mocked—Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. He who is now the witness of your conduct, and who knows your thoughts afar off, will shortly be your impartial judge—Sinners, prepare to meet him! Poor stupid intoxicated sinners—you wonder at our importunity—because you are insensible of your danger. You think you are perfectly safe; we know that you are staggering upon the very verge of the pit of burning! you think your case is not so bad as we represent it—we know that it is inconceivably worse! You think God is merciful—we know that he is just as well as merciful! You think that we are mistaken—we know that you are in the most dangerous error! You think it is time enough to repent—we know that this night your soul may be required of you! You think you have many years to live in the world—we know that the  
years

years of the wicked shall be shortned ! You think that you will begin to think of heaven at a more convenient season—we know not but that before to-morrow you may be in hell !

O sinner, remember heaven and hell are glorious and dreadful realities ! as thou valuest thy immortal soul, and thy felicity in an eternal state—prepare—“ prepare to meet thy God.”



A N

H Y M N

On Amos IV. 12.

I.

**SINNER**—Prepare, thy God to meet,  
Think not thou canst thy crimes secrete;  
He comes with vengeance arm'd complete,  
To crush his foes beneath his feet.

II.

If thou to fordid gold art wed,  
If pleasure be thy downy bed,  
Or worldly honours lift thy head,  
He comes—he comes to strike thee dead.

III.

The raging sea, the thirling sand,  
The winds are all at his command;  
Thunders and storms are in his hand—  
Who can before his lightning stand?

IV.



# A N H Y M N.

## IV.

Ah! sinner! dost thou still delay?  
In thy defence, what canst thou say?  
Or do?—in that tremendous day—  
When heaven and earth shall pass away?

## V.

Hark!—how the trumpet's rending sound,  
Bursts through the skies, and shakes the ground!  
See!—all the world's in flames around!  
Till earth, nor seas, nor skies are found!

## VI.

While far beyond the former skies,  
From heaven the purple banner flies,  
And God, the great, the just—the wise,  
Descends with lightning in his eyes.

## VII.

Terror and glory, truth and grace,  
Shine in the God incarnate's face;  
And lines of blood where angels trace,  
That love he bore the human race.

## VIII.

# A N H Y M N.

## VIII.

The sun in his meridian height,  
That sea of fire—that world of light!  
Nor beams so fair nor shines so bright,  
But turns to darkness in his sight.

## IX.

Around his throne ten thousands stand  
Of angels bright—a radiant band!  
While goats and sheep,\* on either hand,  
Are sever'd by his great command.

## X.

Saints! joyful meet him in the air!  
But sinners! hear the judge declare  
Your doom!—and sink into despair!  
Oh sinners, then prepare, prepare.

\* Matt. xxv. 33.

F I N I S.

7

# A N H - Y - M A I N

## VIII.

The sun in his meridian height  
 That sea of fire - that world of light!  
 Not beams to fair nor shines to bright  
 But turns to darkness in his light.

## IX.

Around his throne ten thousands stand  
 Of angels bright - a radiant band!  
 While gems and scepters on either hand  
 Are given by his great command.

## X.

Stand! joyful meet him in the air!  
 His fingers! hear the judge declare  
 Your doom! - and sink into despair!  
 Oh sinners, then prepare, prepare!

• MARK XXV. 33.





